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781 789 Meditation is the only path to the higher seats whereby man becomes a yahanda, fit for Ne'ban, possessed of the six kinds of wisdom :—

1. The faculty of seeing like a nat or dewa.
2. The faculty of hearing like a nat.
3. Creative power.
4. Knowledge of the thoughts of others.
5. Freedom from passion.
6. Knowledge of one's own past existences.

781 788 [824] They sit therefore for long hours fingering their rosaries, the beads made of the seeds of the *Canna indica*, "Indian shot," which sprang from Shin Gautama's blood, and repeating many times the prescribed formulæ, most often the Thamatawi Patthana—All is changeful, all is sad, all is unreal; followed by the Tharana Gôn, the invocation of the Three Precious Gems, the Lord, the Law, and the Assembly. So by abstraction of the mind they hope to acquire the four laws of Edepat :—

1. Absolute power over the will.
2. Absolute power over the mind.
3. Absolute power of execution.
4. Absolute power over the means to the object.

781 812 The discipline is terrible to all but a slow-minded man, and we can well imagine one who thus presents himself to the people as a living memento of all that is sacred and perfect in the religion, longing for the extinction of Ne'ban, where he may escape from the misery of recurring lives.

> Ask of the sick, the mourners, ask of him
> Who tottereth on his staff, lone and forlorn,
> Liketh thee life? These say, The babe is wise
> That weepeth being born.

792 So each one in the brotherhood passes the time each afternoon : some asleep, some racking the brain with mystical musings, some learning, some teaching, while throughout all sounds the din of the schoolroom, where the pupils are shouting out their tasks at the top of their voices.

Between three and four the lessons are finished, and the shins and scholars perform any domestic duties that may be

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with his own emancipation alone. This criticism is not entirely just. It ignores his service to the community, even if it is allowed that this service is not his primary aim. It also ignores certain emphases in the Buddhist scriptures, and at least one passage where the monk is enjoined to include in his meditations 'radiant thoughts of love' to all mankind.[39]

Nevertheless, the greater part of his activity is individual. In some respects, he may be compared with the scholar whose researches may ultimately benefit mankind though meantime they involve seclusion to the neglect of more obvious duties. The monk's value to the villagers is dependent on his own sanctity (as the villagers would readily agree).

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Comparison with the scholar is apt in another sense, for the spiritual exercises which should occupy the monk's solitude seem, at first glance, to be severely and solely intellectual. Burmese monastic studies have been largely guided by the *Abhidhammatthasaṃgaha*,[40] a commentary which is nothing if not analytic. Its purpose is to guide the student to realise existence as the Buddhist estimates it, a flux of component elements. He is to persevere in meditations which will yield an utter detachment from all alluring vanities. In this manual "we see a philosophy which starts with an analysis of (1) what we find (a) within us, (b) around us, and of (2) what we aspire to find. Mind is analysed and catalogued," says Mrs. Rhys Davids. "We cannot but be struck ..... by the relatively strong microscopic power of the introspection employed" – –[41] so struck, indeed, that some have concluded that such a monk must live in a world far apart from the villagers he is supposed to instruct. *His* Buddhism is not *their* Buddhism. So it is argued. The monk is too much the scholar.

Thus we have another theory of two religions in Burma, but this time it is not Buddhism and Animism, it is two Buddhisms: popular and monastic. The distinction is inescapable. We may question, however, whether the distance between scholar and peasant is any greater than in other religious traditions.

There are two qualifications which should prevent exaggeration. The first is the fact that the meditations by which the monk hopes to progress in the eightfold Path to Nibbāna are not so entirely intellectual as they appear to be at first glance. All through there is an equally strong emphasis on moral purity which the *Uposatha* recitals enforce. It is a persistent ethical reference which belongs to scholar and peasant alike.

Secondly, there are, as we have seen, different grades of monks. Not

[39] *M.1.* 123ff. *(Kakacūpama Sutta)*, cf. *D.1.* 4; cf. Yamakami Sōgen: *Systems of Buddhistic Thought*, chap. II, p. 56.

[40] Trans. by Shwe Zan Aung as *Compendium of Philosophy*, P.T.S., London, 1929.

[41] *Ibid.* Preface, pp. XVIII, XIX.

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every man in a yellow robe is fully ordained, and not every ordained monk is a scholar. There are Brother Junipers who have little more learning than the average farmer. On the other hand, there are laymen who have advanced a considerable way in higher studies and disciplines. The Lēdi Sayādaw's manual on the Exercises, for example, is written for laymen.[43] Thus between the scholar and the simple villager there is a mediating world, composed both of monks and laymen.

Through this mediating world, the moderating influence of scholarly orthodoxy filters down to the realm of popular Buddhism where imagination roves more freely.

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Here, however, we are met by another objection which, if true, cancels the first. There are so few scholars, it is said, so few really learned *monks* that their influence is negligible. The ordinary monk is not scholarly enough. He is just as much swayed by primitive superstitions as the people he instructs or fails to instruct. He is idle, ignorant and often dissolute. The last criticism need not detain us. Nearly every book on Burma debates the character of the monks. Few fail to acknowledge that, in general, the monks live up to their ideal of chastity. Father Sangermano, who was certainly no indulgent critic, even goes further and suggests that in this respect they might serve as an example to the religious of his own Church. He adds that an offender is expelled by indignant villagers, 'even driving him away with stones' — an observation which reminds us that the most vigilant critics of the monks may be the Burmese people themselves.[43] The Burmese name for monk, *pōn-gyi*, means 'great glory.' Since there is no suggestion of priestly or Brahmanical power, since the value of the monks depends on their *kutho* and their *kutho* on their character, it is difficult to believe that they could have retained this title and the esteem in which they are generally held, if they had been as unworthy as some of their harsher critics suggest.[44] As to their knowledge, whilst nobody would claim that every wearer of the yellow robe is a scholar, we have only to glance at such a survey as Bode's *Pali Literature* to realise that there has been a persistent tradition of Pali learning in Burma since the eleventh century which tends to orthodoxy and could not have failed to impress itself, in some degree, on the mind of the people.

[43] *The Vipassanā Dīpanī, or The Manual of Insight*, trans. by U Nyāna (Mandalay: no date).

[43] Op. cit., chaps. XIV, pp. 115–16.

[44] On the character of the monks, cf. *M.B.B.*, pp. 20, 21, 62; Bigandet, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 260, 270 ff.; Fielding Hall, *The Soul of a People*, chap. X, pp. 134 ff.; Nisbet, *Burma under British Rule*, p. 147; Richards, *The Burmese*, p. 24.

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employed for this escape, but "the commentators take pains to show that the non-being in *nirodha* is not the mere passing away ... of the corruptions and the aggregates." It is the non-birth, non-origination of further Ill. Nibbāna has therefore a very positive significance. As one commentator insists, if Nibbāna merely denoted the extinction of lust, hate and dulness, then every stupid animal, every bear, leopard, deer, monkey when its lust subsided would experience Nibbāna, and there would be fifteen hundred Nibbānas as each various hindrance in the Path was overcome. Extinction of the corruptions is the condition, sanctity the result, nirodha the locus and the reality *(paramattha)* of Nibbāna.

But this reality can only be explained in negative terms. No concept will convey the true meaning, no analysis will reveal the true nature of the Reality. It is by intuition or penetration that it is attained. "Being intent, one realises the ultimate fact of cessation by the body and sees it by intuition through *paññā*." [*] ... "Repeated contemplation by worldly knowledge brings about penetration or intuition by means of transcendental knowledge."

6. *'No intuition, no salvation'*

Threading the Dialogue and the Essay there is a similar insistence. Both U Agga and Sumana emphasise that Intuition alone gives full understanding, and U Agga, who is the more speculative of the two, does so the more emphatically. "In my view intellect and intuition are held to be radically different as poles asunder.... For us, who can only observe from without, Nibbāna must be present in time. And yet Ariyans intuit as out of time (*kālavimutta*) because they simply abide in their own intuition *(paccuppanne viharati)* without reference to time concepts."

Those who can only observe from without, those who have not entered the Path-of-the-Stream and attained this necessary insight, may seek to understand what has not yet been made clear to them personally, they may analyse here and inquire there, but ultimately they are dependent upon what the Ariyans have made known, from their penetrating vision, especially the greatest Ariyan of all, the Buddha. Hence they acknowledge, "I take refuge in the Buddha." Hence, too, in the speculations of the schoolmen, a recurrent appeal to scripture, as in this Dialogue, and, with this appeal, concern for what the earlier, great commentators have discerned, that the letter of scripture may be better understood. Much of the subsequent discussion takes the form of deductions from accepted dogma. In this reference, Buddhism may be described as a religion of

[*] *paññā* — constructive imagination; comprehension; insight.

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Revelation. No Buddhist prophets, it is true, have declared: 'Thus saith the Lord.' But the place of the prophets has been taken by the Ariyans, the saints, the enlightened ones who can declare: 'Thus have I seen.' And what they have seen is authoritative.

It is therefore misleading to represent Buddhism as entirely a religion of free inquiry and self-reliant rationalism. Buddhism, whether it be the Buddhism of the peasant or the Buddhism of the schoolman, is further removed from the occidental rationalism of the nineteenth century than some Western rationalists have realised. There are, it is true, passages in the Pali Canon in which the Buddha affirmed that each disciple must discover the truth for himself, without slavish dependence on authority. It is also true that 'the whole (Buddhist) system is based on intellectual activity.'[88] But this intellectual activity is never regarded as a means sufficient in itself. It is joined with an equal regard for moral purification, and it is always a means to an end — to that Ariyan *intuition* which is indispensable to Nibbānic fulfilment. It makes little difference whether this ultimate intuition is distinguished from intellect as a difference in degree or as a difference in kind — a point of dispute in the Dialogue. In either case, the distinction is emphatic. "No true knowledge is complete without intuition," observes the author of the Dialogue, in another context. "The Buddhist maxim is: 'No intuition, no salvation.... Arahants may lack knowledge, or may be excelled by others, or may have doubts, in ordinary, worldly, practical matters, though they possess the intuition of the real in common with the Buddha."[89]

In the Dialogue, and in his comparison between Bergsonian intuition and the Buddhist conception, Shwe Zan Aung suggests that this penetrating insight may be realised, at least partially and fitfully, in those intellectual exercises and analyses which lead to the Ariyan vision. But his general emphasis is upon the belief that full salvation, and, with it, full understanding, is only attained with full vision — in Nibbāna.

It follows, therefore, that all prior speculation is admittedly relative and limited. It is limited by reference to what the Ariyans have made known. It is limited by the inquirer's recognition of his own present inadequacy. Until he is purified from corruption, until he achieves the Nibbānic intuition, he can only hazard from outside.

It is further limited by the fences which surround Nibbāna, placing it 'out of time,' a separate category of reality, without parts or distinctions, a transcendental object.[90] Since it is thus distinguished from present,

[88] Rhys Davids, *American Lectures*, chap. v, p. 181.

[89] "The Buddhist Philosophy of the Real," *J.B.R.S.*, Vol. VII, Part III, (1917), p. 230.

[90] Cf. Aung, *Compendium of Philosophy*, pp. 6, 81 ff.

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conditioned existence, none of the terms which belong to normal experience can properly apply. All the similes employed the — other shore, the island of refuge, the highest blessing — are but dim anticipations.

Speculation, indeed, advances at times to the utmost limit and may seem to venture beyond. The 'Compendium of Philosophy' indicates the exercises which should be followed in the quest for super-normal knowledge and seems, in places, to delineate what, one would suppose, can scarcely be known to inquisitive intellect. The final stages of the saint's progress are minutely analysed. This tendency to speculation is seen, maybe in the fact that the Abhidhamma Piṭaka elaborates a fivefold classification of jhāna, where the Sutta Piṭaka is content with a fourfold.[77] Philosophy is not to be gainsaid. Intellect strains at the leash. The Buddhist schoolman is as persevering as the Christian. He does not despise intellect and he works it hard. Thus Shwe Zan Aung is compelled to reject the suggestion of Mastinsen that 'the nana (intuition) prepares us to meet some mode of apprehension at a glance, in which all process is dispensed with, and the end is struck by a flash.' For Buddhists have not dispensed with all process. On the contrary, they 'have to resort to a very peculiar and complicated process' to win a momentary flash of [illegible].[78] The Compendium, for example, mentions forty stations of exercise in the exposition of 'Calm', with recommendations for different types of aspirants — some for a passionate habit of mind, some for muddle-heads. Prior to these, there is a schooling in minute analysis, logical and psychological, which, one might suppose, would either defeat or excite any muddle-head!

The relation between this intellectual approach and the resultant insight is, as we have seen, debated by scholars. We might say that some of these are more rationalistic than others; they would not make too sharp a division between intellect and intuition; they are not so patiently agnostic as their fellows. Like other schoolmen, they cannot resist the temptation to define the Infinite. Philosophy must have its day, in Buddhism as elsewhere, and there is certainly ground for the criticism that philosophers — or dogmatists? — or both? — by their subtle classifications and sharp determinations have turned poetry into prose and religion into metaphysics. Not, however, without resistance. And the point to be observed is, that this resistance arises within the Order, among the doctors. It is maintained by those who are mindful of the ultimate mystery of Nibbāna, those who mark the gulf between stumbling intellect and emancipating vision. The real, they insist, is finally incomprehensible. It is beyond the capacities of intellect. Intellect is a useful

[77] *Ibid.*, p. 88, footnote. [78] *Ibid.*, p. 255.

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servant, but the servant must not be presumptuous. In this divergence we have part of the answer to the question raised at the outset of this chapter: the relationship between popular conceptions and the ideas of the learned bhikkus. If there are two Buddhisms in Burma (and I doubt it), the division is not to be drawn between monk and layman. It is between mystic and rationalist. And it cuts into the heart of the Saṃgha itself. There, among the learned bhikkus themselves, are scholars who would set a limit to speculation and narrowing definition. To them, as to the villager, Nibbāna, though differently apprehended, is remote, and for essentially the same reason: only the saint can experience Nibbāna, only the saint can know. Since all language is meantime inadequate, there is room enough for toleration.

If the point is pressed, the Burmese Buddhist is better described as a mystic than as a rationalist. His mysticism, however, is a sober, commonsense mysticism. Raptures, it is true, are mentioned in the scriptures and associated with *jhāna* (trance). But mystical raptures are not necessary to salvation.[73] There are 'dry-visioned' Arahats who attain emancipation without them. Greater emphasis is placed on will and concentration than on any emotional excitement which may make the Path more interesting. Serenity, not rapture, is the mark of the Buddhist saint.

Dry or rapturous, however, the Arahat must achieve vision — a power of insight beyond normal intellect.[74] Intellectualism stands at the portal of mysticism, the scholar doing homage to the seer.

Consequently, until this vision is attained, piety and commonsense dictate a reverent agnosticism. Nibbāna, 'the question of questions', remains a question. Such is the attitude maintained by the Burmese Buddhist in general. Scriptural similes are quoted, but many realise their inadequacy. The final word is that Nibbāna is inexpressible. One can indicate it best by saying what it is not not conditioned, not in time, not birth, not death. As a concept, it belongs to that class of religious apprehensions which defeats language, leaving us to do our best with negative terms.

Nevertheless it is a very positive apprehension, with positive, definite and religious impacts on Buddhist thought and life. It has certain features which recall other major terms in the history of religion.

It is dominating. In spite of its vagueness — 'that apex of vacuity,' Mrs Rhys Davids calls it — it is a persistent term. For the Buddhist it denotes an aspect of reality which will not let him go. There was Nibbāna before Buddhism, but, without Nibbāna, there could be no Buddhism.

[73] *Ibid.*, pp. 68, 220. [74] *Ibid.*, p. 235.

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Yet it is a term which vexes understanding. If non-Buddhists are at a loss to define it, if they disagree concerning it, they can scarcely be blamed, for Buddhists themselves are at a similar loss. This reality of realities leaves them confounded.

Nevertheless, it is a consolidating, consummating term. "Nirvana is the *non plus ultra* of the *dhamma* expounded by the Buddha, the *summum bonum* of Buddhism, the ultimate of all that a Buddha taught or would teach. Thus Buddhism is in essence a proclamation of the truth of nirvana ... a tried path leading to Nirvana."[75]

Nibbāna is the *gospel* of Buddhism, the term which signifies emancipation, salvation. The greatest assurance which can encourage the devout disciple is the assurance that he is indeed in the Path-of-the-Stream and will now, without doubt, attain Nibbāna. It is the term which turns pessimism into optimism and makes it absurd to describe Buddhism as a pessimistic religion. At the same time, it is the term which makes it true to say that Buddhism *IS* a religion — not merely an ethic or a philosophy.[76]

Yet it is not without ethical reference, for Nibbāna is linked with the thought of necessary moral purification. While the persevering bhikku may seem to emphasise intellectual exercises, he knows that these exercises are vain unless, at the same time, there is a sustained moral discipline. He must go beyond 'mere morality' but he cannot desert it. The villager may approach Nibbāna at a leisurely pace, but every thought of Nibbāna is a challenge to that pace.[77]

[75] Bimala Churn Law, *Concepts of Buddhism*, chap. XI, p. 76.

[76] For this reason, *Nibbāna* rather than *Dhamma* is the consummating, central term of Buddhism — though much depends on the connotation assigned to *Dhamma*.

[77] Dr. W. Stede (in a Note sent me by the late Professor J. A. Stewart) observes: "We must never forget that two aspects are always interlinked in Indian (and therefore also in Buddhist) philosophy: the physical and the ethical. When the physical world is said to be non-spirit (or non-self) and unapproachable by man (Prakṛti is anātmā), this is counterposed by the reality of the self, the attā, which is its own master and ruler in the sphere of responsibility and the maker of its own fate. Here rules the commandment: *attadīpā viharatha* i. e. take your stand on the island of your self, and *Amata*, immortality will be your reward. And that is why complete cessation of craving, complete detachment from the working of physical nature, is equal to Nirvāṇa *and* Amata. He who is emancipated from his attachments is mentally released and spiritually happy. Where he is physically after the breaking up of the constituents, we do not know and cannot express; he must be somewhere but words are insufficient to describe his condition."

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There is therefore much to be said for the suggestion made by Dr. E. J. Thomas that it is to this Nibbāna aspiration we must look, if anywhere, to find in Buddhism a recognition which corresponds to the recognition of the Divine in other religions. "Nirvāṇa ... is not stated in such a way that it can be identified with God, but it may be said to be feeling after an expression of the same truth."[78] Nibbāna is the religious ultimate of Buddhism, and, just as men have failed to express all that God IS, so they have failed to express all that Nibbāna is. Like all such terms which reflect, however dimly, the 'reality of realities' it eludes philosophy while it inspires life.

[78] *The Life of Buddha*, chap. XIV, p. 208.

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"Him I call indeed a Brahmana who .. penetrates to the real, whether in earth, hell or heaven ... a sage, perfected in knowledge."[19] It might seem therefore that growth in science and intellectual acumen would anticipate this experience of perfect knowledge, and there are various descriptions of the bhikku's discipline which indeed suggest a gradual growth towards full realization as life becomes more worthy and intellect more discerning. There are also texts which appear to suggest this more directly. "If lust be abandoned .... to that extent, brahmin, Nibbāna is seen in this life. It is to be realised for themselves by the wise."[20] In the *Dhammapada*, the learned man who drives away vanity by earnestness is described as 'climbing the terraced heights of wisdom' and the bhikku who delights in reflection is close upon Nibbāna.[21] There are passages in which progress seems to be indicated, step by step, including progress from first discernments to higher knowledge and at last to final enlightenment in Nibbāna.

Surely at last we have brought Nibbāna nearer, in this capacity of the trained, persevering intellect? Not only, it would seem, is Nibbāna proclaimed as the goal but some glimpse of the goal itself is vouchsafed to those who are intelligent.

But here we come to the very core of the Buddhist paradox. At the summit of affirmation we are plunged into negation. For Nibbāna is not attained *through* enlightenment. Nibbāna *is* enlightenment. Nibbāna *is* Vision. Only by Vision can it be known and only to Vision can it be fully described. All power short of this Vision is inadequate. Intellect falls short. It is not despised, but neither is it exalted.

We have now to examine the nature and the reference of this negation.

3. *The Buddhist Negation*

Intellect is the busy apprentice of Vision. No one who has studied the exercises in concentration and meditation which form so large a part of the monk's discipline can doubt this function. It is not, indeed, a purely rationalistic function. The zealous Buddhist may be said to seek Nibbāna with all his heart, with all his mind and with all his strength. It is a discipline of the will and the emotions as much as a discipline of the mind. But the schooled, searching intellect certainly figures largely in this approach. There is a minute analysis, an elaborate classification, a sort

[19] *Dhp.* 423. for translation cf. *S.B.E.* X, 1, p. 96 and d'Eypernon, *ibid.*, 175.

[20] *A.* I. 156ff. (*The Book of Gradual Sayings*, Part I, p. 141).

[21] *Dhp.* 28ff. (cf. translation by Mrs. Rhys Davids, *The Minor Anthologies of the Pali Canon*, Part I, p. 13).

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of vivisection of phenomena, tearing existence asunder, piece by piece, until at last no fluttering thread is left to suggest delusive substance or present permanence. The flux is steadily discerned, the complex of intertwining relations displayed, that, through the flux, the mind may see Nibbāna. It is small wonder that Buddhists have claimed that their sages anticipated the methods and objectivity of modern science.

All this preliminary process, however, is negative. In itself it is not Vision. It is the clearing away of confusions to make Vision possible. One is reminded of the relation between patient research and the flash of intuition which has marked the progress of scientific discovery. Buddhists themselves have discussed, as we have seen, whether the resultant Vision should be regarded as enhanced intellectual discernment or distinguished as something radically different.

A glance at one of the mental exercises detailed in the Pali scriptures will illustrate the problem. The object of this exercise, called the Stages of Deliverance,[22] seems to be to deliver the aspirant from any illusion of substantiality in the phenomena around him; to train him to look Beyond. First he is to contemplate the form of his own body, then, unconscious of his own body, he is to contemplate forms exterior to himself. There follows a stage of intentness, dwelling on the thought, "It is fair." The fourth stage is attained "by passing wholly beyond all consciousness of material qualities (or forms), by the dying out of the awareness of sensory reaction, by the unheeding of any awareness of difference." Thus "he enters into that rapt ecstasy which is a consciousness of infinite space." "The idea of the infinity of space is the only idea that is present." Then he leaves space behind and thinks only of the infinity of reason or intellect (viññāṇāññca).[23] Next he dwells on the thought, "Nothing at all exists." Then he "remains in the state of mind to which neither ideas nor the absence of ideas are specifically present, and finally he reaches the stage of mind in which both sensations and ideas have ceased to be." Other exercises focus the mind on particular objects in order to realise their impermanence. The discipline involves a resolute effort to look away from and beyond all conditioned existence.

Since Nibbāna Vision is the vision of *unconditioned* rea , it might be considered that such a resolute detachment from condit ed reality as that indicated in the exercises would resolve into Vision, that Vision might be construed as right direction and enhanced pow of intellect. The Lēdī Sayādaw seems to give a qualified support to such an interpretation. "For those whose knowledge has been abundantly trained in the doctrines of the intuitively wise Ariyan philosophers, even their inferential

[22] *D.* II, 112f.; *D.* III. 262f.;
[23] *A.* IV. 306. cf. Keith, *Buddhist Philosophy*, chap. VI, p. 124.

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knowledge may be said to partake of the nature of intuitive knowledge, since it invariably leads to the latter kind. By persistent cultivation that inferential knowledge is changed into intuitive knowledge."[24] And Shwe Zan Aung speaks of 'resort to a very peculiar and complicated process to win a momentary flash of abhiññā' (intuition, super-intellection).[25] Apprentice intellect, then, may have glimpses, perchance, of Nibbāna.

But a fleeting glimpse is a very different thing from the steady vision, the perfect understanding which betokens Nibbāna. Nor does it greatly affect the issue whether the full Nibbāna Vision is regarded as a difference in kind or a difference in degree from probing intellect. What is emphasised in Buddhist thought and practice is the fact that the difference is there, however it may be conceived.

Between the knowledge which belongs to enlightenment and the knowledge which precedes this enlightenment there is a wide gulf fixed. For this latter knowledge is still clouded by ignorance, hindered by corruptions not yet destroyed. Hence the Buddha's rebuke to his questioner: "It is possible, brethren, that some senseless fellow, sunk in ignorance and led astray by craving, may think to go beyond the Master's teaching!"[26] Hence the fact that he speaks, indeed, as Master. Hence the Buddha's authority. "The Buddha," it has been said, "speaks from experience"[27] — but, in the view of his followers, it is from super-normal experience. Therefore it is the Buddha's word upon which his followers base their teaching; the grain of that teaching they gather from the granary he has provided.[28] And the Buddha, for his part, distinguishes himself from other teachers who are still groping in blindness.[29]

It is this gulf in experience which partly explains his silence on questions which have since been classed by his followers as the Great Indeterminates, questions which the Buddha left open, answering neither Yea nor Nay.[30] Various reasons have been given for this silence.

It has been suggested that the Buddha himself did not know the answers or that he had reached no clear conclusion.[31] Or that he was not interested in philosophy, indeed, distrusted philosophy, and these ques-

[24] "Some Points in Buddhist Doctrine," *J.P.T.S.* 1913—14, p. 115; cf. also Mrs Rhys Davids, *The Birth of Indian Psychology*, chap. XX, pp. 425, 426.

[25] *Compendium of Philosophy*, p. 225.

[26] *A.* III. 104.

[27] Reischauer, *Studies in Japanese Buddhism*, chap. I, p. 30.

[28] *A.* IV. 163.

[29] *Ud.* 68.

[30] *D.* I. 17ff.; *D.* I. 187 etc.

[31] Keith, *Buddhist Philosophy*, chap. II, p. 45.

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tions were speculative. For this last explanation, there is some support in the Pali scriptures. "The jungle, the desert, the puppet show, the writhing, the entanglement of speculation ... conduce neither to wisdom, nor to insight...."[32] There is still stronger support for the suggestion that his silence was dictated by pastoral motives; "This question is not calculated to profit," the Buddha tells Potthapāda, "it is not concerned with the Dhamma."[33] Rhys Davids suggests that the speculations were eschewed because they were based on insufficient evidence.[34] But insufficient evidence for whom? For the Buddha himself, it might be said from the standpoint of the critical historian. We are considering the question, however, from the standpoint of his followers, from the standpoint of the Buddhist faith. From such a point of view there can be no question of insufficient evidence: the Buddha knew all that was to be known; he was the Enlightened One. But the Buddha himself might well consider that there was insufficient evidence for the disputants and for his followers who had not yet attained the Nibbāna vision. That, in fact, is the attitude indicated. Professor Keith, it is true, argues the contrary: the Buddha's agnosticism is "not based on any reasoned conviction of the limits of knowledge."[35] But against the evidence which Dr. Keith emphasises — the Buddha's admission that he did not reveal the past, even when true, if it did not tend to edification — there are the Buddha's answers which imply that what he had in mind was the flimsy basis of the views disputed, the vain arguments, as much as the views themselves. "In this case, brethren, some recluse or Brahman is addicted to logic and reasoning. He gives utterance to the following conclusion of his own, beaten out by his argumentations."[36] "In this case, brethren, some .. Brahman .,.. resorts to wriggling like an eel."[37] The Buddha contrasts his own omniscience with the limited knowledge of these stumbling metaphysicians. *He* knows. They only surmise.

Apart, however, from any 'proof text,' such an attitude is the consequence of the gulf envisaged between an experience informed by Vision and an experience deprived of this Vision. The ten questions specifically listed as Indeterminates all refer to what might be regarded as 'unconditioned reality' — the ultimate nature of the world, the ultimate nature of man, the nature of Nibbāna.[38] Since Vision alone penetrates to this

[32] Eg. *M.* I. 455, trans. Rhys Davids, *op. cit.* Part I, p. 254).
[33] *D.* I. 188.
[34] *Dialogues of the Buddha*, Part I, p. 188.
[35] Keith, *op. cit.*, p. 45.
[36] *D.* I. 21, (trans. Rhys Davids, *op. cit.*, Part I, p. 34).
[37] *D.* I. 27, (trans. Rhys Davids, *op. cit.*, Part I, p. 39).
[38] Cf. Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, Part I, p. 187.